

September, 21 2002

Dear Griffin Family and Friends,

Welcome to the Red Griffin newsletter. In an attempt to keep in touch while deployed, we will put these out at least once a month to keep you up to speed with where we are and what we're doing. Please feel free to forward these on to friends. If you wish to add someone to the list, just reply to the sender's address with any additions.

In an effort to keep this unclassified so everyone can read it, specifics will not be mentioned. We will make every effort to give you as much information as possible without crossing the classification line.

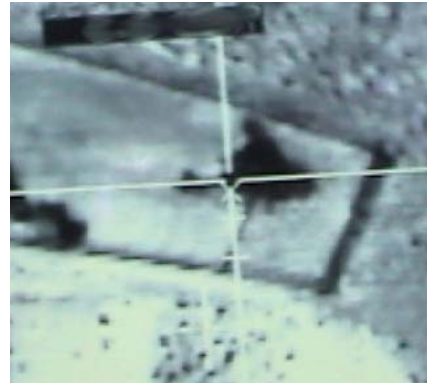
The Red Griffins continue to prepare for deployment. Having just returned from a very successful air wing training detachment in beautiful Fallon Nevada, your Red Griffins were singled out for excellence in aircraft availability, sortie completion, Electronic and Strike Warfare.



At Fallon, VS 38 introduced the Viking's newest weapon, the Standoff Land Attack Missile – Expanded Response (SLAM-ER).

Successes realized at Fallon were the result of many months of hard work by

our outstanding Maintenance Department as well as the entire squadron.



Beginning only days after returning from our last WESTPAC deployment, our maintenance professionals began an arduous journey of inspecting, repairing, modifying, and installing many new modifications making the squadron the most capable Viking squadron in the world. Every division, work center, and sailor has played a significant part of this spectacular accomplishment.



Although all hands worked very hard, the squadron enjoyed a few moments team building in the form of "friendly" sporting events. Most noteworthy was the annual Enlisted Vs. Officer grudge match football game.

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Still licking their wounds from last years crushing defeat, the officers dared to challenge the champions once again. This year the officers provided a more respectable showing yet the Enlisted Team prevailed with a 21-point margin.



In spite of the crushing defeat, there was a lot of laughter. The Griffins also enjoyed other intramural sports, including basketball and softball.



Our time in San Diego is waning as preparations continue with the most fervent commitment to excellence.

Your husbands, fathers, and sons continue to prepare the squadron for a most worthy task: defending our great nation from those who would threaten it. I know this comes at a significant price and family sacrifices. Your support is to be commended, for it enables us to serve our great nation to the fullest extent possible. For that, I thank each and every one of you. I am extremely proud to be serving with such great men.



In closing, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to our Ombudsman, Michele Klees, who has been a great support over the past several months. Recall, she is there to provide critical liaison between the command, it's personnel, and our loved ones. As was mentioned during our pre-deployment brief, this time can be stressful and I pray for an extra measure of patience and grace for all of us. Thanks again for the support you provide and I look forward to writing you all again soon.

Warm regards,

CDR William J. Hart
Commanding Officer, VS 38